



America's Voices on Border Security

Experts Outline the "Catastrophic" Cost of Illegal Immigration to American Taxpayers

"The fiscal drain on the taxpayers by those who are here illegally is catastrophic. In public safety, healthcare, social services and education, illegals cost Los Angeles County taxpayers nearly \$1 billion dollars per year."

--Michael Antonovich

Los Angeles County Supervisor

At a [House Judiciary Committee hearing](#) in San Diego today, Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael Antonovich and other experts will outline the high costs that illegal immigration levels on American taxpayers. The hearing is one of twenty hearings being held in nine states by the House of Representatives during the month of August. Excerpts from Supervisor Antonovich's and Heritage Foundation Analyst Robert Rector's prepared testimony are below:

The Honorable Michael D. Antonovich

Los Angeles County Supervisor

"In discussing immigration, one must first distinguish between legal and illegal immigration. Legal immigration strengthens our nation. However, illegal immigration is an affront to those who legally immigrate. It tears at the moral and economic fabric of our society. It should not be rewarded."

"Los Angeles County has a larger population than 42 states--10.2 million. However, it is also home to almost 12% of the country's illegal immigrant population -- the most of any county in the nation. Unlike the east coast where the cities run most of the social service and criminal justice programs, Los

Angeles County has the responsibility for felony prosecutions and all social and welfare services.”

“As we have experienced since the passage of the Simpson-Mazzoli legislation in 1986, amnesty only provided incentives for continued illegal entry into our country. We must not repeat the mistakes of the past. We need to tighten the borders, increase enforcement, prosecution, and end ineffective strategies including the “catch and release” program for detained illegals.”

“The fiscal drain on the taxpayers by those who are here illegally is catastrophic. In public safety, healthcare, social services and education, illegals cost Los Angeles County taxpayers nearly \$1 billion dollars per year.”

“Twenty-five percent of inmates in our county jail system are illegals. The cost to our county’s justice system is \$150 million dollars a year which includes incarceration, prosecution, defense and probation.”

“Our health care delivery system has become the HMO for the world. Within our health care delivery system, approximately 30 percent are illegals who are being treated annually at a cost of roughly \$360 million dollars. Our county’s department of health services estimates that nearly 26% of the ambulatory care visits were made by illegal immigrants.”

“We are one of the few countries in the world where children of illegal aliens become legal citizens if born here. As a result, every child born to an illegal alien is entitled to a variety of social services, including welfare, until they are 18 years of age. This costs Los Angeles County nearly \$276 million dollars annually in Cal Works payments (formerly called aid to families of dependent children.) This does not include the costs of food stamps and child care services.”

“Nearly 100,000 children of 60,000 undocumented parents received aid in January 2006 – for a total of 160,000 illegal immigrants and their U.S. born children receiving government aid. Illegal immigration causes American citizens and legal immigrants to pay more for jails, hospitals and classrooms.”

Robert Rector

Senior Research Fellow, Domestic Policy Studies, The Heritage Foundation

“Recently the Senate passed The Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act (CIRA) (S.2611). This bill will provide amnesty, and put 9 to 10 million illegal

immigrants on a path to citizenship. Once these individuals become citizens, the net cost to the federal government through added benefits will be around \$16 billion per year.”

“In the long run, the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act (CIRA) (S.2611), if enacted, would prove the largest expansion of government welfare in 35 years. The overall governmental costs of the amnesty provisions alone of CIRA are likely to reach \$50 billion per year.”

“Illegal entries increased dramatically shortly after IRCA went into effect. It seems plausible that the prospect of future amnesty and citizenship served as a magnet to draw even more illegals into the country. After all, if the nation granted amnesty once why wouldn’t it do so again?”

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